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NOTES ON THE DELPHIC ORACLE AND GREEK COLONIZATION

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Near the beginning of Cicero's treatise *On Divination*, to illustrate the importance attached by different races to various kinds of prophetic power the question is asked, "What colony has Greece sent into Aeolia, Ionia, Asia, Sicily, or Italy without an oracle from the Pythia or Dodona or Ammon? Or what war has been undertaken by Greece without the will of the gods?"¹ With this general testimony of Cicero we may compare harmonious statements from other authors. "It was under the lead of Phoebus," says Callimachus, "that men measured out their cities, for Phoebus ever takes pleasure in the establishment of cities, and it is Phoebus himself who contrives their foundations."² And the rhetorician Menander³ asserts that Apollo had colonized the mainland, the sea, Libya, the Hellespont, the East, and all Asia, and says that the earth would have run the risk of being uninhabited had not the oracles of the gods everywhere

¹ *De div.* 1. 3. For the form of expression compare Cic. *De rep.* 2. 9: "Coloniarum vero quae est deducta a Graeis in Asiam, Thraciam, Italiam, Africam, praeter unam Magnesiam, quam unda non adluat?"

² *In Apoll.* 55 ff.; cf. Justin. 8. 2. 11 (of the Athenians): "immemores . . . quod illo duce [sc. Apolline] tot bella victores inierant, tot urbes auspicato condiderant."

³ 17 (*Rhet. Gr.* IX, 326, Walz); cf. Aristides. *Paneg. in Cyzico* 237: περὶ οὗτοι δὲ τῶν καὶ τῶν ἐν Ἰππερίᾳ πόλεων οἶμαι τὸν περὶ Κυζίκου χρησμὸν καὶ τὸν μάρτυρα τῆς εὐδαιμονίας τῇ πόλει, ὃς ταῖς μὲν ἄλλαις πόλεσιν ἐξηγητὴς ἐστίν, τῇ δὲ πόλει ταύτῃ καὶ ἀρχηγέτης, τὰς μὲν γὰρ ἄλλας πόλεις διὰ τῶν οἰκιστῶν ὥκισεν οὐδ' ἀπέστειλεν ἑκαστοχόσε, ταύτης δὲ ἐκ τοῦ εὐθέως αὐτὸς γέγονεν οἰκιστής, κτλ.

gone forth, from Delphi and from Miletus.¹ Celsus also, as preserved to us in the pages of Origen,² inquires: "How many cities were founded as a result of oracles . . . and as a result of oracles averted diseases and famine! And how many which neglected or forgot the oracles came to an evil destruction! And how many were sent forth for colonization and after complying with the things enjoined became prosperous!" In reply to which Origen,³ not refuting the facts for pagan Greece, shows that the words of the Hebrew prophets, when heeded, have been followed by colonizations, cures, and rescues of equal importance, or, when neglected, by similar disasters. In the Scholia Danielis to Virgil's *Aeneid*⁴ we find the statement, now grown vaguer through antiquity, that "the ancients used to receive by oracles signs by which they built their towns." Finally, in two other passages similar functions are ascribed to *μαντεῖαι* in general,⁵ but possibly with Delphi more or less clearly in mind.

With these general statements, ranging in date from Callimachus to the scholia on the *Aeneid*, have been combined a multitude of concrete cases lying between limits far earlier and later, and on the results have been based the widely divergent views of many scholars, from the enthusiastic acceptance of Grote⁶ and Curtius⁷ to the critical attitude of Holm,⁸ Busolt,⁹ Pöhlmann,¹⁰ and Hiller von Gaertringen,¹¹

¹ ὅτι ἐκινδύνευε μὲν ἀνοίκητος εἶναι γῆ πᾶσα, εἰ μὴ τὰ μαντεῖα τοῦ θεοῦ πανταχοῦ δὴ γῆς ἐξεφόλτῃσε παρ' ἡμῶν, ἐκ Δελφῶν, ἐκ Μιλήτου, κτλ. This fear of leaving a place wild and uninhabited appears a little farther on in the same passage (Walz, p. 328).

² *Contra Celsum* 8. 45.

³ *Ibid.*, 8. 46.

⁴ *Ad Aen.* 3. 88.

⁵ Plut. *De Pyth. orac.* 9: ἀλλὰ ταῖς τε μαντεῖαις ἐπιμαρτυροῦσι πολλὰ μὲν ἀναστάσεις καὶ μετοικισμοὶ πῶθεν Ἑλληνίδων πολλὰ δὲ βαρβαρικῶν στρατιῶν, κτλ. Ps.-Lucian *De astrolog.* 23: ἅπερ οἱ παλαιοὶ ἰδόντες μάλιστα μαντηλήσιν ἐχρέοντο καὶ οὐ πάρεργον αὐτὴν ἐποίεοντο, ἀλλ' οὔτε πόλιας ᾤκισον οὔτε τείχεα περιβάλλοντο οὔτε φόνους ἐργάζοντο οὔτε γυναικας ἐγάμεον, πρὶν ἂν δὴ παρὰ μάντεων ἀκοῦσαι ἕκαστα, κτλ.

⁶ *History of Greece*, chap. i: "he [i.e., Apollo] is moreover the guide and stimulus to Grecian colonization, scarcely any colony ever being sent out without encouragement and direction from the oracle at Delphi; Apollo Archêgetês is one of his great surnames."

⁷ II, chap. 4 (Eng. tr. [1888] II, 49-50); cf. Raoul-Rochette, *Histoire critique de l'établissement des colonies grecques* (1815), I, 53 ff., whose attitude is reasonably cautious.

⁸ *Gr. Gesch.*, I, 278, 293 ff. (Eng. tr., I, 244-45).

⁹ *Gr. Gesch.*, I, 678: "Man darf nicht glauben, dass das delphische Heiligtum der hellenischen Kolonisation die Bahnen vorgezeichnet hat."

¹⁰ *Grundriss der gr. Gesch.* (5th ed.), pp. 47, 55 (with notes 3 and 4); n. 4 *fin.*: "Von einer förmlichen Leitung der Kolonisation, wie sie z. B. Curtius annimmt, kann keine Rede sein, da das delphische Orakel erst im 7. Jahrhundert eine panhellenische Bedeutung gewann. Die angeblichen Orakelsprüche, welche die Koloniegründungen auf Delphi zurückführen, sind meist Erfindungen *ex eventu*."

¹¹ In Pauly-Wissowa, *Realencyclopädie*, IV, Sp. 2535-36 (*s.v.* "Delphoi").

or the even more condemnatory silence of Beloch.¹ Upon a subject so often discussed it is unlikely that much new light will be shed; but since I have recently had occasion to collect a considerable number of colonization oracles, I have been tempted to re-examine the question a little in detail.

It should be remembered that the utterances of the Delphic oracle, like some other expressions of divine will, might be profoundly influenced by the wording of the questions submitted to it, as is well shown by Xenophon's famous question of the oracle and the criticism of it by Socrates, as told in the *Anabasis*.² Consequently our views of the effect of Delphi upon colonization will be much modified according as we judge whether the oracle was asked by intending colonists where they should settle or merely asked by them to approve their settlement in some locality already selected.

In addition to this double possibility in the form of the questions there is variety in the forms of answers ascribed to the oracle itself. We have, first, direct answers, in which the place to be settled is clearly mentioned by name or described in unmistakable terms. Secondly, there are what may be called conditional answers, in which, usually, no definite locality is named but the colonists are directed to found their town at the place where some particular thing shall occur. A third class may be called ambiguous oracles, in which, with or without conditional elements, the oracle as worded may be understood in more than one sense—sometimes in two widely divergent interpretations. In the past these three groups have not always been carefully differentiated, though it should be clear that arguments applying to one group will not necessarily hold for another.

Let us, then, briefly review the oracles, noting, first, the gods by whom they are given, next, the two types of question, and, thirdly, the three types of answer. We shall then be in a better position to consider the different theories.

1. Cicero, in the passage with which I began,³ mentions three oracles—Delphi, Dodona, and Ammon—as having actively influenced colonization. The placing of these three on a level is censured by Holm, who says, "Moreover Cicero's words do not bear out the vast importance ascribed to Delphi, as they place it on a level with

¹ In his *Gr. Gesch.*

² *De div.* 1. 3.

³ *Anab.* 3. 1. 5-7.

Dodona and the Libyan Oasis. If Dodona and Ammon could achieve as much as Delphi, then the achievement was nothing more than a formality."¹ The great majority of the cases I have collected ascribe the oracle to Delphi or to Apollo by name. Not a few refer to ὁ θεός as the source,² but here, in the absence of qualification, we are probably justified in assuming Apollo of Delphi, the supreme prophetic god, as meant. Oracles of this sort from Dodona are mentioned by Dionysius of Halicarnassus³ in the case of the Pelasgi (who had probably resorted to Dodona as being near where they were staying) and⁴ in the case of Aeneas, who consulted it when he landed at Buthrotum, near by. Pausanias⁵ and Suidas⁶ mention an oracle from Dodona to the Athenians, and Stephanus of Byzantium⁷ one to Galeotes and Telmessus. Other sources of such oracles are the Sibyl,⁸ Apollo at Miletus (Branchidae),⁹ at Clarus,¹⁰ Grynean Apollo,¹¹ the *Lyciae sortes*,¹² and Apollo at Delos,¹³ these three latter instances coming, not from Greek authors, but from chance revivals or possibly inventions in Virgil. A certain prophetess (*fatidica*) is said to have foretold to Evander a place of settlement,¹⁴ and several cases of the foundations of towns are said to have been due to dreams. Thus accounted for are the origins of Alexandria,¹⁵ the later city of Smyrna,¹⁶

¹ *Gesch. Gr.*, *loc. cit.* I quote from the English translation, I, 244, n. 9.

² Hdt. 7. 170; Diod. 4. 29. 1; Dion. Hal. 19. 3. 1; Apollod. *Bibl.* i. 9. 2; Paus. 7. 3. 1; Plut. *Aetia Graeca* 13; 15; *id. De Pyth. orac.* 27; Schol. Apoll. Rhod. 2. 848; Schol. Ar. *Nubes* 133; Strab. 6. 262, 278; Zenob. 1. 57; 5. 74; Ephorus ap. Steph. Byz. *s.v.* 'Αλιείς; Steph. Byz. *s.v.* Θυάτεια; *Paroem. Gr.* ii. 370, No. 33; 421, No. 96. Much more vague is the expression: *κατά τι λόγιον ἀποικίαν ἀπέστειλεν*, in Diod. 5. 54. 4; cf. *κατά τι θεοπρόπιον* (Zonar. 7. 1).

³ 1. 18.

⁴ Dion. Hal. i. 51; cf. i. 55, which indicates some doubt as to the source of the oracle about the eating of the tables: *ἦν γάρ τι θέσφατον αὐτοῖς, ὡς μὲν τινες λέγουσιν ἐν Δωδώνῃ γενόμενον, ὡς δ' ἕτεροι γράφουσιν ἐν ἐρυθρῇ χέρσῳ τῆς Ἰδης, ἐνθα ὤκει Σίβυλλα ἐπιχωρία νύμφη χρησμοδός, ἣ αὐτοῖς ἔφρασε πλεῖν ἐπὶ δυσμῶν ἡλίου, κτλ.*

⁵ 8. 11. 12.

¹⁰ Paus. 7. 5. 3.

⁶ *S.v.* 'Αννίβας.

¹¹ Virg. *Aen.* 4. 345.

⁷ *S.v.* Γαλεῶται.

¹² *Ibid.* 4. 346, 4. 377.

⁸ See n. 4, *supra*.

¹³ *Ibid.* 3. 85 ff.

⁹ Menand. *Rhet. loc. cit.*

¹⁴ Schol. Dan. Virg. *Aen.* 1. 273.

¹⁵ Plut. *Alex.* 26; Steph. Byz. *s.v.* 'Αλεξάνδρεια.

¹⁶ Paus. 7. 5. 1-2. For a representation of this scene on a coin of Smyrna see Head, *Historia numorum*, 2d ed., p. 594.

Laodicea, Nysa, and Antiochia.¹ Of these cases some are perhaps late inventions ascribing to other oracular seats what customarily belonged to Delphi, but besides these enough still remain to indicate that Delphi could hardly claim any exclusive privilege. Aside from Cicero's words I have found no evidence for Ammon, and it is not impossible that Cicero has added its name simply as that of a famous oracle often mentioned in connection with the other two,² and to furnish a rhetorical group of three, without any definite knowledge on his part of a tradition linking it with Greek colonization. Its inaccessibility would also have made consultation difficult.

2. As to the types of question asked there is in most cases no evidence. Occasionally there are indications that the oracle was questioned after a site had been selected by the questioners. Thus, according to Thucydides,³ the Lacedaemonians in 426 B.C. thought that Heraclea Trachinia would be a convenient military stronghold and set out to found a town there. First they consulted the god at Delphi, and when he bade them settle they sent colonists from their own number and from the Perioeci and any other Greeks who wished to go, except Ionians, Achaeans, and certain other races. When Alexander proposed a relocation of the city of Smyrna the inhabitants of the existing city consulted the oracle at Clarus and obtained a favorable reply before complying with his wish.⁴ Traditionally of the contrary sort are the cases in which commands for colonization

¹ Steph. Byz. s.v. 'Αντιόχεια, Λαοδίκεια. Such dreams on the part of Aeneas are also related (Diod. 7. 3. 5; *Origo gent. rom.* 12. 5).

² Ar. *Aves* 716; Plat. *Legg.* 5. 738c; for those mentioned, in addition to others, in stock lists of oracles, see Max. Tyr. 14. 1; 41. 1; Orig. *Contra Celsum*. 7. 3; Athanas. *De incarnat.* 47; cf. F. Jaeger, *De oraculis quid veteres philosophi iudicaverint*, Munich, 1910, p. 22, n. 2. For rhetorical groups of three cf. Plin. *Ep.* 2. 20. 9.

³ 3. 92. Diodorus (12. 59. 3-5), who gives a somewhat similar account, makes no mention of any consultation of the oracle. So Dorieus, after an initial failure in colonization ascribed to his having omitted to consult the oracle, questions the god *εἰ αἰτέει ἐπ' ἣν στέλλεται χώραν* (Hdt. 5. 42).

⁴ Paus. 7. 5. 1-2. Epaminondas, before the foundation of Messene (Paus. 4. 27. 5), having already determined on its site, *ἐκέλευεν ἀνασκοπεῖσθαι τοῖς μάντεσιν εἰ βουλήσεται ταύτη καὶ τὰ τῶν θεῶν ἐπιχωρήσαι. φαμένων δὲ καὶ τούτων εἶναι τὰ ἱερὰ αἶσια, οὕτω παρεσκευάζετο ἐς τὸν οἰκισμὸν, κτλ.* No weight should be attached to the statement of Diodorus, 8. 29. 1: *ὅτι Ἀριστοτέλης ὁ καὶ Βάττος κτίσαι βουλόμενος Κυρήνην ἔλαβε χρησμὸν οὕτως*, for not only from this account but also from others (Hdt. 4. 150-56; Plut. *De Pyth. orac.* 27) it seems clear that Battus is not thought of as having previously determined upon a site, but, on the contrary, as having had difficulty in identifying the one prescribed by the oracle.

are given to those represented as having consulted the oracle about other matters and not having in mind the establishment of colonies. To Heracles after his labors;¹ to Cadmus inquiring about Europa;² to Alcmaeon seeking purification after the murder of his mother;³ to the contemporaries of Orestes inquiring about averting pestilence and sterility of the fields;⁴ to the Boeotians in a similar case;⁵ to Battus trying to remedy his stammering;⁶ to Myscellus asking how to obtain children;⁷ and to the Heraclidæ⁸ and Laciæ and Anti-phemus⁹ inquiring about entirely different matters, came oracles enjoining colonization or change of residence. In other instances the initiative traditionally came from the god.¹⁰ The inquirers are sometimes groups—cities, bands of exiles, families—and often individuals, usually the οἰκιστής.¹¹

3. The types of answer may next be considered. It must here be recognized that even if one should grant, for the sake of argument, the general authenticity of the answers reported, it must yet be admitted that the accounts of them are constantly incomplete, since

¹ Diod. 4. 29. 1.

² Apollod. *Bibl.* 3. 4. 1; Schol. Hom. *Il.* 2. 494.

³ Thuc. 2. 102; Paus. 8. 24. 8-9; cf. Apollod. *Bibl.* 3. 7; 5. 3 ff.; Schol. Lucian *Deorum concil.* 12 (pp. 212-13, Rabe).

⁴ Schol. Vat. Eur. *Rhes.* 250.

⁵ Justin. 16. 3. 3.

⁶ Hdt. 4. 150, 155, and Macan's note on 155; Schol. Pind. *Pyth.* 4. 10. But J. J. Schubring (*De Cypselo Corinthiorum tyranno*, Göttingen, 1862, pp. 30-31) argues that Aristoteles (which we are told was his real name—Hier. *Chron.* ann. Abr. 1253, calls it Aristeus) took the title of Battus (the Libyan word for "king"), and that to explain its likeness to the Greek word for "stammerer" the oracle was invented. In this suggestion Schubring is followed by Studniczka, *Kyrene*, pp. 96-97. A reference in Heracl. Pontic. *De rebus publ.* 4. 1 (*FHG*, II, 212) should also be cited here.

⁷ Diod. 8. 17.

⁸ Isocr. *Archidamus* 17: ὁ δὲ θεὸς περὶ μὲν ὧν ἐπηρώτησαν οὐκ ἀνείλεν, ἐκέλευε δ' αὐτοὺς ἐπὶ τὴν πατρίαν ἵεναι χώραν.

⁹ Steph. Byz. s.v. Γέλα.

¹⁰ Cf. Hdt. 7. 170. In the case of Myscellus (Diod. 8. 17; Strabo 6. 262), when the oracle had bidden him found Croton, he, admiring the region of Sybaris, preferred to build there instead, and it was necessary for the god to reprove him in a second oracle.

¹¹ Cf. Aristides *Paneg. in Cyzico* 237. In an important inscription from Magnesia on the Maeander both the colonists and the oecist make separate inquiries of the god. See O. Kern, *Die Gründungsgeschichte von Magnesia am Maiandros*. The inscription is also found in Kern's *Die Inschriften von Magnesia am Maeander*, No. 17; Michel, *Recueil d'inscriptions grecques*, No. 855.

only such parts of the tradition are cited as suit the immediate purpose of the writer who happens to preserve them. For various reasons it is unsafe to lay any especial weight upon those given to us in ostensibly the original words of the oracle. Yet taking the answers as they stand, under those which may be classed as direct¹ there are varying degrees of vagueness, from the ones which name only a continent² or country,³ those which name but do not otherwise describe the future city,⁴ those which give an additional characterization of its site by naming the river upon which it is to be built,⁵ an island or other natural feature,⁶ or a somewhat limited area in which it is to be situated,⁷ to the dream of Alexander instructing him to build on the spot where he was then sleeping.⁸

¹ Occasionally an answer which is mainly direct may contain additional confirmatory conditional elements, as that to the Chalcidians (Diod. 8. 23. 2), in which the Apsia River is definitely mentioned, and the additional instruction is given:

Ξυθ' εἰσω βάλλοντι τὸν ἄρσενα θῆλυσ ὀπυῖει
Ξυθα πόλιν οἴκισε, κτλ.

οἱ δὲ κατὰ τὸν Ἀψίαν ποταμὸν εὐρόντες ἀμπελον περιπεπλεγμένην ἔρινεῷ τὸ λεγόμενον ἀρσενόθηλυν ἔκτισαν πόλιν. Cf. the founding of Tarentum (Dion. Hal. 19. 1. 4) and of Edessa (Justin. 7. 1. 7).

² One version of the founding of Cyrene (Heracl. Pont. *loc. cit.*) mentions only Libya as the destination of the colony; so even Hdt. 4. 150-51, in part of his account. Cf. Pind. *Pyth.* 4. 6 ff., and Plut. *De Pyth. orac.* 27, for the perplexity of Battus in determining the site to which he was sent. But see also Schubring, *op. cit.*, pp. 5-6, for the improbability that the people of Thera should not have known of Libya.

³ E.g., Italy (Virg. *Aen.* 4. 345).

⁴ So Tabae in Lydia (Steph. Byz. *s.v.*), and the accounts of Diodorus of the founding of Cyrene (8. 29. 1) and Croton (8. 17); cf. Strabo 6. 262, 269. In Strabo 6. 257, Messenian exiles are told to settle with the Chalcidians in Rhegium (cf. Timaeus in *FHG*, I, 206-7, Nos. 64-65.) The resettlement of Troy is definitely directed (Schol. Vat. Eur. *Rhes.* 250).

⁵ Gela (Diod. 8. 23. 1); Tarentum (Dion. Hal. 19. 1. 4); Laurentum (Zonar. 7. 1); the settlement on the Apsia (Diod. 8. 23. 2); the new site of Smyrna (Paus. 7. 5. 3).

⁶ A mountain, in the Magnesia inscription, cited in p. 6, n. 11, *supra*; a floating island (Dion. Hal. 1. 18; Steph. Byz. *s.v.* Ἀβοριγίνες); Ortygia and Arethusa (Paus. 5. 7. 3); geographical features of Byzantium (Steph. Byz. *s.v.* Βυζάντιον). This oracle is not entirely clear and it is noteworthy that its third verse, as quoted by Stephanus, appears, very slightly altered, as the fourth verse of a somewhat similar foundation oracle for New Rome (Constantinople) in *Anth. Pal.* 14. 115; cf. G. Wolff, *De novissima oraculorum aetate*, pp. 3-4. Cf. Strabo 3. 169-70, for the colonization of Gades ἐπὶ τὰς Ἡρακλέους στήλας, and the uncertainty as to where that might be; finally, for a tree growing out of the grave of Idmon cf. Schol. Apoll. Rhod. 2. 848.

⁷ Cyprian Salamis (Eur. *Hel.* 148 ff.); Tarentum (Antiochus ap. Strabo 6. 279 and Diod. 8. 21. 3).

⁸ Paus. 7. 5. 2. Upon the exact words of the Schol. Dan. Virg. *Aen.* 1. 273. (. . . "fatidica quae praedixisset Evandro his eum locis oportere considerare") no stress should be laid.

Among conditional answers one is struck by the large number in which the condition is dependent upon the appearance or action of some animal or plant. Of such the story of Cadmus and the cow,¹ whose sinking down in weariness denoted the place for the founding of Thebes, is the most famous and possibly suggested several others.² We find a sow,³ a wild boar,⁴ wolves,⁵ foxes,⁶ deer,⁷ goats,⁸ mice,⁹ an eagle,¹⁰ white crows,¹¹ and a lark¹² among the animals appearing in such replies. As an instance of a plant may be cited the wild olive growing on the grave of Idmon, mentioned by the scholia to Apollonius Rhodius.¹³ But of more interest is a group of cases in which

¹ Eur. *Phoen.* 638 ff.; Apoll. Rhod. 3. 1180 ff.; Schol. Hom. *Il.* 2. 494; Apollod. *Bibl.* 3. 4. 1; Hygin. 178; Ov. *Met.* 3. 6 ff.; Plut. *Sulla* 17; Paus. 9. 12. 1 (where the cow is described in some detail); Serv. *Aen.* 3. 88; Nonnus *Dionys.* 4. 289 ff.

² Ilium (Apollod. *Bibl.* 3. 12. 3. 1-2: ἐν ᾧ περ ἂν αὐτῇ (the cow) κλιθῇ τόπω), and Buthrotum (Schol. Dan. Virg. *Aen.* 3. 293: "in eo loco ubi bos cecidit"); cf. Steph. Byz. and *Etym. Mag.*, s.v. Βουθρωτός); also *Paroem. Gr.*, II, 370, No. 33.

³ Diod. 7. 3. 4: τετράπουον αὐτῷ καθηγῆσασθαι πρὸς κτίσιν πόλεως; Dion. Hal. 1. 55: ἡγεμόνα τετράποδα ποιησαμένους, ὅπου ἂν κάμῃ τὸ ζῷον; Serv. *Aen.* 3. 390: "ubi aus illa post fugam fuisset inventa."

⁴ Athen. 8. 361: ἥ ἂν ἰχθὺς δέλξῃ καὶ ὧς ἀγρίος ὑφηγήσεται.

⁵ Apollod. *Bibl.* 1. 9. 2: ἐν ᾧ περ ἂν τόπω ὑπὸ ζῴων ἀγρίων ξενισθῇ, where the sequel shows the wild beasts to be wolves.

⁶ Steph. Byz. s.v. Ἀλωπεκόννητος: ἐνθα ἂν σκύλακος ἰδῶσιν ἀλώπεκος.

⁷ Steph. Byz. s.v. Θυάτεια: οὗ ἂν ὀραθῇ ἔλαφος τετοξευμένη καὶ τροχάζουσα; *ibid.* s.v. Βυζάντιον: ἐνθ' ἰχθὺς ἔλαφος τε νομὸν βόσκουσι τὸν αὐτόν. Cf. *Anth. Pal.* 14. 115: ἐνθ' ἰχθὺς ἔλαφος τε νομὸν βόσκονται ἐς αὐτόν.

⁸ Solinus 9. 12; Justin. 7. 1. 7: "iussus erat ducibus capris imperium quaerere"; Porphyry. Tyrius (*FHG*, III, 690) mentions merely the oracular command to settle.

⁹ Strabo 13. 604: ὅπου ἂν οἱ γηγενεῖς αὐτοῖς ἐπιθῶνται (cf. Schol. Dan. Virg. *Aen.* 3. 108: "ubi noctu a terrigenis oppugnatus esset"); Heracl. Pont. *De rebus pub.* 42 (*FGH*, II, 224), of a mouse, οὗ ὀφθέντος πόλιν κατὰ χρησμὸν ἔκτισαν.

¹⁰ Steph. Byz. s.v. Γαλεῶται: ὅπου τε ἂν αὐτῶν θυομένων αἰετὸς ἀρπάσῃ τὰ μηρία.

¹¹ Schol. Ar. *Nubes* 133: ἐνθα ἂν ἰδῶσι λευκὸν κόρακα; cf. Eustath. ad Hom. *Od.* 13. 408 (p. 1746, 61 ff.); Athen. 8. 361; Zenob. 3. 87 (*Paroem. Gr.*, I, 78); Apostol. 7. 96 (*Paroem. Gr.*, II, 421); Kern, *Die Gründungsgeschichte von Magnesia am Maian-dros*; Wilamowitz, *Hermes*, XXX, 189. It should be noted, however, that this oracle indicates, not the place to settle, but the time to emigrate.

¹² Paus. 4. 34. 8: κόρυδον τὴν ὄρνιθα ἐκ μαντεύματος . . . ἤγῃσασθαι. An undescribed bird is mentioned in the Schol. Dan. Virg. *Aen.* 1. 242: "eo loco . . . quo sagittis avem petisset." For the whole subject of animals as guides to a new home, see the important note of Frazer on Paus. 10. 6. 2, and, for ominous animals in general, L. Hopf, *Thierorakel und Orakelthiere in alter und neuer Zeit*, Stuttgart, 1888.

¹³ 2. 848; cf. p. 7, n. 6.

there is an ambiguity between plant and animal life. The two most famous cases are those of the Ozolian Locrians and the city of Rhegium. Locrus was warned to settle, according to Plutarch¹ and Athenaeus,² wherever he should be bitten by a wooden dog (ξύλινης κυνός). The solution of this puzzle was his being pricked by a briar (κυνόσβατος) and settling at the place where it occurred. The Chalcidians who found Rhegium are to establish their town where the male shall be discovered married to the female.³ The answer comes when they find a vine twining around a wild fig tree. And for Tarentum a similar oracle is related.⁴ Other conditional answers are that concerning the eating of tables by the Trojans,⁵ and those in regard to Thurii,⁶ Vienne,⁷ Buneima,⁸ and various other towns.⁹ The conditional oracle described by Stephanus of Byzantium (s.v. Ἰδάλιον) is plainly aetiological, for it commands the founder of Idalium to settle *ὅπου ἴδοι τὸν ἥλιον ἀνίσχοντα*. One of the company at the proper time exclaims *εἶδον, βασιλεῦ, τὸν ἥλιον*, and the town receives its name from this fact. Aetiological are also the oracles

¹ *Aetia Graeca* 15.

² 2. 70c.

³ Diod. 8. 23. 2; Dion. Hal. 19. 2. 1; Heracl. Pont. *De rebus pub.* 25. 3 (FHG, II, 219). Compare the frequent poetic use of this figure, as in Hor. *Epod.* 2. 10.

⁴ Dion. Hal. 19. 1. 4: *ἐνθ' <ἀν> ἴδωσι τράγον τῇ θαλάττῃ τέγγοντα τὸν γένειον*. The fulfilment follows: *κατὰ τινος ἔρινεοῦ πλησίον τῆς θαλάττης πεφυκτός ἀμπελον ἐθεάσαντο κατακεχυμένην, ἐξ ἧς τῶν ἐπιτράγων (shoots) τις καθευμένος ἤπτετο τῆς θαλάττης*. Cf. Diod. 8. 21. 3, citing the verses, and contrast p. 10, n. 6.

⁵ Virg. *Aen.* 3. 253 ff.; 7. 107 ff.; Dion. Hal. 1. 55; Strabo 13. 608; *Origo gent. Rom.* 12. 3; Lycophr. *Alex.* 1250 and schol.

⁶ Diod. 12. 10. 5-6: *ὅπου μέλλουσιν οἰκεῖν μέτριον ὕδωρ πίνοντες, ἀμετρὶ δὲ μᾶζαν ἔδοντες*. They find a *κρήνην ὀνομαζομένην Θουρίαν*, *ἔχουσαν αὐτὸν χαλκὸν ἐν ἐκάλουν οἱ ἐγχώριοι μέδιμνον*. Cf. Zenob. 5. 19 (*Paroem. Gr.*, I, 123) where the preferable reading *μέτρῳ ὕδωρ πίνοντες* appears.

⁷ Steph. Byz. s.v. *Blennos*: *ὅπου ἐλωδέστατον τόπον θεάσονται κατοικήσαι*.

⁸ Steph. Byz. s.v. *Βούνειμα*: *ἐλθεῖν πρὸς ἄνδρας οἱ οὐκ ἴσασι θάλασσαν*.

⁹ Athen. 3. 96d, e: *ἐνθα ἂν ξενίοις πρῶτον τιμηθῇ, τοὺς πόδας αὐτῷ καὶ τὴν κεφαλὴν ἐπὶ τῷ δέιπνῳ παραθέντων*, which happened at Eleusis; Dion. Hal. 19. 3. 1-2; *γῆν δὲ οἰκίσειν εἰς ἣν ἂν καταχθόντες ἡμέραν καὶ νύκτα μείνωσι*. This the colonists themselves arrange shall be in the territory of Tarentum. Strabo 4. 179: *ἡγεμόνι χρῆσασθαι τοῦ πλοῦ παρὰ τῆς Ἐφεσίας Ἀρτέμιδος λαβοῦσι*. A dream further explains that they are to take *ἀφίδρυνά τι τῶν ἱερῶν*. Steph. Byz. s.v. *Ἀῤαρα*, 'Ἀλιεῖς; *ιδ.* s.v. *Γέλα* (quoting Aristaenetus) speaks of two brothers who are bidden to go *πρὸς ἀνατολὰς ἡλίου* and *ἐφ' ἡλίου δυσμῶν*.

dealing with Argilus in Thrace,¹ Buthrotum,² Halieis,³ Alopeconnus,³ Thyatira,³ Auara,³ and Aegae.⁴

Among ambiguous answers may be included those requiring explanation before they can be used, and susceptible of more than one interpretation. This class was even in antiquity responsible for not a little of the adverse criticism of the oracles, as may be seen in an important section of Cicero's treatise *De Divinatione*,⁵ and is a class noteworthy rather for the cleverness of its logical puzzles than for the frequency of its cases. Thus we find the oracle to Phalanthus⁶ to found his city where he should see rain from a clear sky (*ὑπὸ αἴθρα*), which is fulfilled at Tarentum by a flood of tears from his wife, whose name was Aethra. According to Pausanias⁷ the Sicilian expedition was due to an oracle from Dodona bidding the Athenians colonize "Sicelia," which they wrongly understood as the island rather than a ridge of that name near Athens. The conditional oracles which I have enumerated in which there is a confusion in form and interpretation between the animal and vegetable kingdoms are, of course, related to this group. And there are also some cases where understanding is rendered difficult, not by equivocation, but by obscurity of language, such as that in which the Heraclidae are advised to return to their ancestral land,⁸ doubtful advice because of the uncertainty as to what land is to be so considered.⁹ Alcmaeon,

¹ Heracl. Pont. *De rebus pub.* 42 (*FHG*, II, 224).

² Schol. Dan. Virg. *Aen.* 3. 293; Steph. Byz. and *Etym. Mag.*, s.v. *Βουθρωτός*.

³ Steph. Byz. s.v.

⁴ Solinus 9. 12; cf. the story of the oracle about Gela (*Etym. Mag. s.v.*), though here the aetiological element lies in the rest of the story rather than in the words of the oracle itself, and is absent from the account as given in Diod. 8. 23. 1, and Steph. Byz. s.v. For an etymological explanation of the Battus legend see p. 6, n. 6. And in speaking of the conditional group in general I should mention a comparison suggested to me by Professor Campbell Bonner, namely, the passage in the *Odyssey* (11. 126 ff.) in which Teiresias directs Odysseus to perform certain sacrifices at a place to be identified in a manner quite characteristic of this conditional type.

⁵ 2. 115-16.

⁶ Paus. 10. 10. 6-8. And yet compare the very different oracle (due to a different tradition) given in the reference cited in p. 9, n. 4. Such inconsistencies as this have a force, not always easily measured, but cumulatively considerable, in weakening our acceptance of the oracular tradition.

⁷ 8. 11. 12; Suid. s.v. *Ἀννίβας*.

⁸ Isocr. *Archid.* 17 ff. Is the oracle in Virg. *Aen.* 3. 94-96, perhaps influenced by this story?

⁹ *Ἄργος μὲν κατ' ἀρχιστεῖαν . . . Λακεδαίμονα δὲ κατὰ δόσιν . . . Μεσσήνην δὲ δοριάλωτον ληφθεῖσαν*; cf. Pind. *Pyth.* 5. 65-68.

too, was puzzled by the command to colonize a land which had not been seen by the sun and had not even been land at the time of his murder of his mother, until he discovered this place in the Echinades Islands which had recently risen from the sea.¹ The famous oracle in regard to Byzantium,² urging settlement opposite the city of the blind, appears, however, to have caused no doubt in the minds of its recipients, and additional indication of its late adaptation as an oracle comes from the ascription of the remark by Herodotus³ to Megabazus the Persian.

If we look at the oracles preserved ostensibly in their original form, neglecting such labored revivals or archaizings as those dealing with Smyrna, Laodicea, and Constantinople,⁴ and those about Dardanus,⁵ and the Pelasgi,⁶ we shall find that a considerable number are concerned with the colonies in Magna Graecia⁷ and Sicily,⁸ doubtless being derived from the histories of Antiochus of Syracuse and of Timaeus.⁹ The others which I have gathered are those for Byzantium,¹⁰ Magnesia,¹¹ Tabae in Lydia,¹² and Cyrene.¹³

One other kind of evidence must be noted, namely the indirect testimony regarding Delphi as a guide of colonization which is found

¹ See p. 6, n. 3.

² Strabo 7. 320; Tac. *Ann.* 12. 63; other references cited by J. Miller in Pauly-Wissowa, *Realencyclopädie*, s.v. "Byzantium." Plin. *N.H.* 5. 149 mentions Chalcedon as sometimes called *Caccorum oppidum*.

³ 4. 144, and see the note of Macan, who remarks that "one cannot suppose that Hdt. would have transferred an immortal witticism from the god to a barbarian."

⁴ Smyrna: Paus. 7. 5. 1-3; Laodicea: Steph. Byz. s.v.; Constantinople: *Anth. Pal.* 14. 115.

⁵ Dion. Hal. 1. 68.

⁶ *Ibid.* 1. 18; Steph. Byz. s.v. 'Αβελρύγινες.

⁷ Croton: Diod. 8. 17; Zenob. 3. 42; Suid. s.v. 'Αρχίας. Apsia: Diod. 8. 23. 2; Tarentum: see p. 9, n. 4, and p. 10, n. 6.

⁸ Gela: Diod. 8. 23. 1; Syracuse: Paus. 5. 7. 3; cf. Suid. s.v. 'Αρχίας.

⁹ E. Meyer, *Gesch. des Altertums*, II (1893), sec. 285; cf. p. 14, n. 3.

¹⁰ Steph. Byz. s.v. Βυζάντιον.

¹¹ See p. 6, n. 11.

¹² Steph. Byz. s.v.

¹³ Hdt. 4. 150 ff.; Diod. 8. 29. 1; Plut. *De Pyth. orac.* 27; Schol. Pind. *Pyth.* 4. 10a. Against the genuineness of this tradition see p. 6, n. 6, and p. 7, n. 2. Yet F. Benedict, *De oraculis ab Herodoto commemoratis*, Bonn, 1871, who arranges very clearly the successive oracles dealing with the foundation of Cyrene, believes that the second (bidding the Therans to colonize Libya) may really have been given. The oracle dealing with Tegea (Steph. Byz. s.v.) should hardly be classed with colonization oracles.

in numerous inscriptions and other references¹ to Apollo with the title Archegetes and similar epithets.² These are in some instances found for towns for which there is literary tradition of a colonization oracle, as well as for many in which such literary data are lacking. In addition, beyond the statements which we can control, it may be supposed that some of the numerous cities named for Apollo³ and the temples in which he appears without an epithet or with some other epithet than those here noted bear testimony to this same theory of his influence on colonization.⁴

Having reviewed the evidence, let us pass to a consideration of its meaning. The three main questions which occur to the mind are these: (a) Are any of the oracles preserved to us authentic, i.e., actually given to colonists before their emigration? (b) If not, is there any proof that the Delphic oracle really influenced colonization, and in what way did it do so? (c) To what motives may be ascribed the manufacture of oracles, if we should find any of such a kind?

a) We must at the outset adopt the only rational view, that, barring the negligible element of chance coincidences, those oracles in which historic facts are foretold with exactness and detail are to

¹ S. P. Lampros, *De conditorum coloniarum Graecarum indole praemiisque et honoribus*, Leipzig, 1873, 11 ff.; Farnell, *Greek Cults*, IV, 374 ff. And cf. the passage quoted in p. 1, n. 3. Of inscriptional and numismatic material there is much, which need not be repeated, from the collections of Lampros and Farnell. It concerns the following cities (F = Farnell, Vol. IV; L = Lampros): Aegina, F. 367, n. 34d; Alaesa, F. 375, n. 69; Apollonia (Epirus), F. 375, n. 74a; Attaleia, F. 375, n. 65; Calymna, F. 375, n. 70; Cyrene, Pind. *Pyth.* 5. 56 ff.; F. 375, n. 74c; Cyzicus, Aristides *Paneg. in Cyzico* 237; F. 375, n. 67a; Enna, L. 14, n. 3; Erythrae, F. 375, n. 65; Halicarnassus, F. 375, n. 68; Hierapolis (Phrygia), F. 375, n. 66; Ilium, F. 374, n. 63; Lycia, F. 375, n. 71; Megara, F. 374, n. 64; Naxos, Thuc. 6. 3. 1; Appian 5. 109; F. 375, n. 69; Rhegium, L. 13, n. 2; South Russia, F. 375, n. 72; Talmis (Nubia), L. 16, n. 5; Tauromenium, F. 375, n. 69; Telmessus, F. 375, n. 67; Thurii, F. 375, n. 74b. For certain other more indirect evidences see Lampros, pp. 16-20.

² The epithets of Apollo in these passages are: ἀρχηγέτης, ἀρχηγός, δωματίτης, ἡγεμών, κλισίτης, οἰκιστής, προηγέτης, προκαθηγεμών. Should the passage in Plutarch *De Pyth. orac.* 16 be referred here? ἔτι δὲ μᾶλλον [sc. ἐπαινῶ] Ἐπετρίεις καὶ Μάγνητας, ἀνθρώπων ἀπαρχαῖς δωρησαμένους τὸν θεόν, ὡς καρπῶν δοτῆρα καὶ πατρῶν καὶ γενέσιον καὶ φιλόανθρωπον, κτλ.; cf. Oehler in Pauly-Wissowa, *Realencyclopädie*, I, Sp. 2826 *init.* (s.v. Ἀποικία).

³ Roscher, *Lexicon*, I, 441, thinks that some of the twenty-five Apollonias mentioned by Stephanus of Byzantium were probably named for this reason.

⁴ Compare also the tithes (χρυσοὺν θέπος) sent by certain cities to Delphi (Bouché-Leclercq, *Histoire de la divination*, III, 133-34; Wilamowitz, *Hermes*, XXX [1895], 182, and n. 2; Plut. *De Pyth. orac.* 16).

be considered as composed after the events which they predict.¹ By this principle the large class of conditional oracles must be rejected, since the movements of animals and the growth of plants could obviously not be foretold. Incidentally, such oracles fail to give directions sufficiently definite to admit of application.² Had any considerable number of conditional answers ever been given, the reputation of the oracle as a helpful and practical agency would have been very effectually ruined. Even in their most unsophisticated days, in matters of such importance, men could hardly have been expected to turn to Delphi unless from past experience they had gained the expectation of real assistance there. The ambiguous oracles are perhaps a trifle less open to question, at least in cases where they contain no conditional element, yet even of the few of these known to us almost none is free from suspicion. Those to the Heraclidae and to Alcmaeon fall in the realm of the mythical or legendary; that about Byzantium was originally a mere human remark;³ the "rain from a clear sky" has a distinct conditional element; and the colonization of "Sicily"⁴ appears suspiciously like a companion piece invented by some one to match the account of the death of Hannibal on "Libyan" soil, which is narrated in close connection with it. Of the plain answers, on the other hand, freed from conditional elements, and excluding late revivals in Virgil⁵ and the *Palatine Anthology*⁶ and such mythical cases as that of the Cyprian Salamis,⁷ there seems to be a residuum which it might have fallen within the physical power of the oracle to declare.⁸ To direct an

¹ Hendess, *Untersuchungen über die Echtheit einiger delphischer Orakel*, Guben, 1882, p. 1.

² Seldom, moreover, do they reveal that remarkable acquaintance with foreign lands that some modern writers have ascribed to the Pythian priesthood. Plut. *De Pyth. orac.* 27, speaks of the difficulties connected with oracles in general: τοῖς μὲν οὖν τότε πολλὴν ἔδει μνήμην παρῆναι. πολλὰ γὰρ ἐφράζετο καὶ τόπων σημεῖα καὶ πράξεων καιροὶ καὶ θεῶν ἱερὰ διαποντίων καὶ ἡρώων ἀπόρρητοι θῆκαι καὶ δυσεξέδρετοι μακρὰν ἀπαίρουνσι τῆς Ἑλλάδος.

³ See p. 11, n. 3.

⁶ See p. 7, n. 6.

⁴ See p. 10, n. 7.

⁷ See p. 7, n. 7.

⁵ See p. 7, n. 3.

⁸ Even here we must note the warning of E. Meyer, *Gesch. des Altertums*, II (1893), sec. 285, note: "Alle Orakel sind von der sehr begreiflichen, aber historisch absurden Anschauung beherrscht, dass der Gott dem ahnungslosen Oekisten befiehlt, nach der Stelle zu ziehn, wo er und seine Nachkommen prosperiren werden." The

emigrant to a definite place, without predicting, in any very explicit way, what would befall him when he reached it, surely required a well-informed rather than a superhumanly wise intelligence.¹ This is not to assert that the oracles ostensibly preserved to us in meter² are authentic in form, for that they are largely later inventions is so generally agreed³ as to need no especial discussion.⁴ Yet that there should have been so large a fabrication without some historic basis seems improbable, especially in view of the additional evidence from the widespread traditions I have mentioned in regard to Apollo Archegetes. Finally, Thucydides is witness to the historic fact of the consultation of the oracle by the Spartans at the founding of the Trachinian Heraclea in 426 B.C.⁵

b) The explanation of these facts must be sought, I believe, as others have sought it, along the line of the confirmatory oracle. That

view of F. Benedict, *De oraculis ab Herodoto commemoratis*, Bonn, 1871, p. 37, is that most oracles about foundations are spurious, either containing prodigies by which the place is to be recognized or a description of the place so exact as to be clearly referable to the period after the place had been settled. "Genuina eiusmodi oracula ea tantum haberi possunt, quibus deus nihil iubet nisi urbem certo quodam loco condi fortasse nomine quoque addito, quod coloniae imponatur." Cf. p. 39, and pp. 37-39, for the oracles he considers as genuine, as having a genuine base later reworked, or as false.

¹ Even in this class there are, of course, suspicious oracles, to be rejected. Such are probably the antithetical pairs promising health and wealth to the settlers of Croton and Syracuse respectively (Strabo 6. 269; Steph. Byz. s.v. *Συράκουσαι*; Suid. s.v. *Ἀρχίας*) and simultaneously sending the founders of Gela and Telmessus to the sun's rising and setting (Steph. Byz. s.vv. *Γέλα*, *Γαλεῶται*. The *Etym. Mag.*, s.v. *Γέλα*, gives only one half of this pair.).

² See p. 11, nn. 5-13.

³ E. Meyer, *Gesch. des Altertums*, II (1893), sec. 285: "Früh sind daher Orakelsprüche in Umlauf gekommen, welche den Oekisten gegeben sein sollen; Herodot und Antiochos von Syracus haben viele von ihnen bewahrt, ihnen folgt namentlich Timaeos (bei Diodor zum Theil erhalten), während Ephoros mit besserem geschichtlichen Verständniss sie meist bei Seite liess. Historisch ist keins dieser Orakel; vielfach sind sie aus den späteren Schicksalen der Colonie zurecht gemacht." Pöhlmann, *Grundriss der gr. Gesch.*, 5th ed., p. 47; Busolt, *Gr. Gesch.*, 2d ed., I, 677; Holm, *Gesch. Gr.*, chap. 19, sec. 9 (Eng. tr., I, 245); Wilamowitz, *Hermes*, XXX, 190 ff.

⁴ Doubts as to the authenticity of extant oracles on stylistic and other grounds began as early as antiquity. Cf. Cic. *De div.* 2. 116; Plut. *De Pyth. orac.* 5 f. Wilamowitz (*Hermes*, XXX, 192), speaking of the inscription from Magnesia, says, "Orakel zu verfertigen war leichter für einen magnetischen Localantiquar als dorisch zu schreiben." The date of this inscription is about 200 B.C., and the date of the oracular verses it contains only a little older (Wilamowitz, p. 194). And see Studniczka, *Kyrene*, p. 98, against the genuineness of the Battus oracles.

⁵ 3. 92.

the consultation of Delphi was not a merely gratuitous act but rather a formal or conventional rite is well indicated by Herodotus,¹ who censures the neglect of Dorieus to consult Delphi as to where he should go, or to do any of the other customary things, and a little later indicates that his disobedience to a subsequent oracle led to his failure and death. Now, that the oracle should have been consulted, perhaps regularly, for the purpose of obtaining favorable predictions or a blessing before the founding of a colony, as before any other act of importance, is both easily credible and highly probable, and bears some resemblance to traditional customs in Italy.² That the approval of the god may have been sought not only for the place of settlement but also for the person of the founder is shown by an inscription from Magnesia on the Maeander³ describing the founding of that town, although generally the founder was apparently already chosen (sometimes self-chosen) and is often spoken of as the one who consults the oracle.⁴ Those who came to Delphi for advice

¹ 5. 42 f.: ὁ Δωριεύς . . . αἰτήσας λαὸν Σπαρτιήτας ἀγεῖ εἰς Ἀποικίην, οὔτε τῷ ἐν Δελφοῖσι χρηστηρίῳ χρησάμενος ἐς ἥντινα γῆν κτίσων ἦν, οὔτε ποιήσας οὐδὲν τῶν νομιζομένων. It is by no means clear that Plato (*Legg.* 6. 759c; 828a) includes the foundation of colonies as an event in which the oracle should intervene, but the approval of the colony's laws and the regulation of some of its religious ceremonies was to be derived thence.

² Raoul-Rochette, *Histoire de l'établissement des colonies grecques*, I, 54; Cic. *Phil.* 2. 40. But the divination in Italy is usually employed immediately before the founding of the town, rather than at so long an interval in advance.

³ Cited in p. 6, n. 11. The relevant part follows: ἐπερωτησάντων δὲ τίς ὁ ἀνὴρ οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ καθηγγησόμενος ἡμῖν καὶ πόθεν, ὁ θεὸς ἔχρησεν.—

Ἔστι τις ἐν τεμένει Γλαύκου γένος ἄλκιμος ἀνὴρ
ὃς γ' ἡμῖν πρῶτιστα ἐπιέζεται ἀντιβολήσας
νῆδον ἐμὸν προλιπούσι· τὸ γὰρ πεπωμένον ἐστίν.
οὗτος καὶ δείξει χέρσου πολύπυρον ἀρουραν.

They apply to Leucippus, and he consults the god on his own behalf and obtains this reply:

στέλλ' ἐπὶ Παμφύλῳ κόλπον, Λεύκιππε, φέροπλον
λαὸν ἀγῶμ Μάγνητα ὁμοσύγγονον, ὥς ἂν ἵκειαι
Θῶρηκος σκόπελον καὶ Ἀμανθίου αἰπὸν βέεθρον
καὶ Μυκάλης ὄρος αἰπὸν ἀπεναντίον· Ἐνδυμῖνον
ἔνθα δὲ Μαρδρόλυτον δόμον ὀλβιοὶ οἰκῆσουσιν
Μάγνητες πολλέουσιν περικτιόνεσσιν ἀγγελτοί.

I have quoted these lines (without noting slight restorations) as being our most important single bit of epigraphical evidence bearing upon the subject under discussion. For the relation of the Magnesians to Delphi cf. also Athen., p. 173. That the epithet "Agyieus," or "god of ways," may have contributed to the consultation of Apollo by those intending to colonize, as Farnell (*Greek Cults*, IV, 202) suggests, appears to me unlikely, since this epithet belongs to him rather as god of streets.

⁴ Cf. Oehler in Pauly-Wissowa, *Realencyclopädie*, I, Sp. 2825, s.v. Ἀποικία.

found there priests who, by reason of conversations with the visitors to the shrine, were no doubt rather well informed as to conditions—geographical, social, political, and commercial—in various parts of the Mediterranean world, and in a position to impart not a little intelligence of value. But here the zeal of some scholars has perhaps led them too far, as in the case of Curtius,¹ who says:

The topographical knowledge of the priests was so accurate that they were always able to ascribe the ill-success of a colony, for which it was endeavored to make them responsible, to a misunderstanding or disobedience of the divine words. . . . It cannot have been but that in the plans of the oracle all shipping news was very accurately preserved in writing, that the results of all new voyages were placed side by side, and that it was endeavored by means of maps of the different countries to understand the situation of the coast-lines already occupied, as well as of those still vacant and suited for settlements. Such attempts had been frequently made at the priestly centers of ancient geographical knowledge, before at Miletus the art of cartography was developed, and Anaximander introduced tabular maps of the earth into the circle of physical science.

This view of the systematic gathering of news and of Delphi as a "well-trained emigration agency,"² has, however, been much qualified by later scholars.³ Evelyn Abbott⁴ imagines the probable care of the priests in concealing the sources of their knowledge—

as by this means the possession of it became the more surprising. Great indeed must have been the astonishment of the wandering mariner when he discovered that his divine guide was acquainted with the local peculiarities of the place selected for the colony to a degree which required a personal knowledge of the country.

But may we not perhaps reply that to the believing consultant the divine omniscience would have been hardly surprising, while the unbeliever (had there been such) would either not have consulted the oracle at all, or, if he had, would have directed his wonder toward the human mouthpieces of the divinity? Nor does Abbott sufficiently emphasize the fact that the oracles which might have been

¹ *History of Greece*, II, chap. 4 (Eng. tr. II, 49–50). And Bouché-Leclercq (*Histoire de la divination*, III, 132) speaks in similar words.

² C. W. C. Oman, *Hist. of Greece*, 5th ed., pp. 92–93.

³ Notably Busolt, *Gr. Gesch.*, 2d ed., I, 678, and n. 2 (where a good bibliography is given); Pöhlmann, *Grundriss der gr. Gesch.*, 5th ed., p. 55, n. 4; Hiller von Gaertringen in Pauly-Wissowa, *Realencyclopädie*, IV, Sp. 2535, s.v. "Delphoi."

⁴ *Hist. of Greece*, I, 362.

given in advance, namely, the plain and direct answers, do not, so far as we can control them, seem to presuppose any superhuman intelligence, while those in which there appears some remarkable coincidence or unusual local knowledge are by that very fact exposed to the rationalizing suspicion of being oracles after the event.

Another element affecting the case is the theory that the oracles more or less frankly confirmatory were not merely intended to guide the settler but also to act as a sort of charter or deed to the land occupied. This view is well set forth by Holm,¹ who remarks that the oracle taken by a colonizing expedition "legitimized the undertaking and gave it a privileged position as regards others—always subject, however, to the proviso that the true meaning of the oracle was discovered." And Holm further compares the pronouncements of Pope Alexander VI legalizing the Spanish and Portuguese colonies. That colonists settling in lands already partly occupied (as in Magna Graecia) sometimes found difficulty in maintaining their position there is little doubt,² and at least one ancient account, though dealing with facts of rather shadowy historical character, yet seems to reflect this feeling, when Dionysius of Halicarnassus³ represents the Aborigines as permitting the settlement of the Pelasgians only after they had learned of the oracle to the latter people bidding them to settle in a certain definite place. That the Spartans within historic times used or tried to use this legalizing character of the oracle to strengthen their claims to disputed land in Greece itself appears probable from several passages.⁴ Abbott suggests⁵ that "the priests at Delphi claimed a right of possession in the whole world beyond the limits of Hellas. In their eyes property did not exist, except among the Greeks." For this view he offers no evidence, and the appearance of the word *δίδωμι* in some of the extant oracles⁶ is perhaps hardly more than a form, occurring in other kinds of oracles also.⁷ Yet even

¹ *Gr. Gesch.*, chap. 19 (Eng. tr., I, 245, n. 9).

² G. Diesterweg, *De iure coloniarum Graecarum*, Berlin, 1865, p. 10.

³ I. 20. Perhaps compare also the first part of the Magnesia inscription.

⁴ E.g., Isocr. *Archid.* 17 ff.; Hdt. 1. 66; Thuc. 3. 92; Steph. Byz. *s.v.* Τεγέα. And cf. Hiller von Gaertringen in Pauly-Wissowa, *Realencyclopädie*, IV, Sp. 2535, *s.v.* "Delphoi," for the attempts to control the oracle as evidence of its influence.

⁵ *Hist. of Greece*, I, 361.

⁶ Hdt. 1. 66; Steph. Byz. *s.v.* Τεγέα; Diod. 8. 23. 2; Strabo 6. 279.

⁷ Cf. Hendess, *op. cit.*, pp. 6-7.

with considerable qualification of Abbott's statement it is not hard to recognize the importance of such legitimizing power. It may be remarked in passing that for purposes of legitimization an oracle which clearly named and described the promised land would be of greater value—because bringing greater conviction—than one which did not, just as with deeds of property at the present day; while an ambiguous one, on account of the doubt as to its proper fulfilment, and a conditional one, because of the vague, transitory, or sometimes deliberately creatable character of its fulfilment, would have carried the least permanent conviction to hostile previous occupants of the soil. Of the oracles preserved ostensibly in their original form (i.e., in meter) I have found none entirely free from any mention of geographical features; that is, purely conditional.

In addition to the desire for good omens and the desire for legitimization a third motive may well have led to the consultation of oracles, namely, the wish to secure instructions as to the introduction of forms of worship into the new colony¹ and to obtain the religious advice and interest of the priests of one of the most powerful and centralized Hellenic cults and the protection of its deity. That definite inquiry about such matters was thought of as forming a regular part of the consultation by intending colonists is indicated by Dionysius.² To a new state, without history and traditions gained from its own soil, either religious or political, the connection, through the worship of Apollo Archegetes or of other gods prescribed by the Pythia,³ with the ceremonial and mythological wealth of Hellas itself could hardly fail to be stimulating. And from the viewpoint of the oracle itself the political opportunities⁴ offered for keep-

¹ Plat. *Legg.* 6. 759c; 8. 828a. A little of such advice is given in the traditional oracle to Dardanus (Dion. Hal. 1. 68):

εις πόλιν ἣν κτίσῃσθα θεοὺς σέβας ἀφθιτον αἰεὶ
θεῖναι, καὶ φυλακαῖς τε σέβειν θυσίαις τε χοροῖς τε
ἔστ' ἂν γὰρ τάδε σεμνὰ καθ' ὑμετέρεην χθόνα μίμνη
δῶρα Διὸς κούρης ἀλόχῳ σέθεν, ἣ δὲ πόλις σοι
ἔσται ἀπόρρητος τὸν αἰὲ χρόνον ἥματα πάντα.

² 1. 68: διαμαντευόμενον δὲ [sc. τὸν Δάρδανον] περὶ τῆς οἰκῆσεως τὰ τε ἄλλα μαθεῖν καὶ περὶ τῶν ἱερῶν τῆς φυλακῆς τόνδε τὸν χρησμὸν λαβεῖν, κτλ.

³ In connection with the dedications in colonies to Apollo, Busolt (*Gr. Gesch.* 2d ed., I, 678, n. 2) somewhat fancifully suggests that such dedications may have reference to his character as god of war and of the spring (when colonies were usually sent out).

⁴ Pöhlmann, *Grundriss der gr. Gesch.*, 5th ed., p. 47.

ing in touch with the outposts of Greek civilization, and, from the mercenary side, the returns in tithes¹ from the colonies over which some control could be asserted, furnished an ample recompense.

c) Some of these same reasons doubtless prompted the subsequent forgery of oracles. The desire for good omens applied only to the founding itself, but the wish to legitimize it, especially in cases of controversy,² might at any time arise, and the desire to consecrate the origins of colonies and cities and to refer them to the gods as originators, as Livy says,³ would increase with the growing pride and dignity of the town. On the part of the priests, the chance to obtain tithes, with the development and increasing wealth of a settlement, would furnish a standing motive for asserting any claims that might antedate its founding. At a time when no needs of actual legitimization were involved, and when the oracle was no longer consulted to any great extent for purposes of colonization, conditional and ambiguous oracles might be very striking and effectual for such an end, and to such a period I believe they must mainly be ascribed. The indirect methods by which the priesthood at Delphi circulated such traditions we cannot control, for their tracks were, of course, carefully covered; but modern scholars have been ready to suspect their influence upon Herodotus, Antiochus of Syracuse, Timaeus,⁴ and even Ephorus.⁵ Once let the theory become established, as it was, apparently, by the time of Herodotus, that the seeking of advice from the oracle was the normal method, and local historians and antiquarians would naturally, unaided or in consultation with

¹ Farnell, *Greek Cults*, IV, 204; Bouché-Leclercq, *Histoire de la divination*, III, 133-34.

² Cf. p. 17, n. 4. And Wilamowitz (*Hermes*, XXX, 191) advances evidence for thinking that the motive for the foundation story in the Magnesia inscription was to secure special privileges for the city from the powerful Cretan sea-rovers, by emphasizing a former residence of the Magnesians in Crete.

³ 1. *Praef.* 7.

⁴ A. von Gutschmid, *Kl. Schriften*, IV, 150 ff., 159 ff. (*Index fontium Herodoti*); Wilamowitz, *Aristoteles und Athen*, I, 284-85; E. Meyer, *Gesch. des Altertums*, II, sec. 285; cf. Macan, edition of Herodotus, Books 4-6, pp. lxxxv-lxxxvi.

⁵ Wilamowitz, *op. cit.*, p. 285; Hiller von Gaertrigen in Pauly-Wissowa, *Realencyclopädie*, IV, Sp. 2522, s.v. "Delphoi." E. Meyer, *loc. cit.*, makes an exception of Ephorus, however. Bouché-Leclercq, *Histoire de la divination*, III, 131, n. 2: "L'oracle refit, à son point de vue, l'histoire de la colonisation, et l'on finit par trouver, à l'origine des métropoles elles-mêmes, l'inévitable *χρησμός* qui en détermine la fondation." Cf. Wilamowitz, *Hermes*, XXX, 182.

Delphi,¹ see that fitting oracles were not lacking in the cases of those towns in which they were interested.² If by the same process an etymology could be furnished for the name of the colony a double end would be attained.³ The projecting of such inventions back into the period of legend would have been a task obviously neither distasteful nor difficult.

To sum up, then, we may say that a closer examination reveals the impossibility of a large number of the oracles extant ever having been delivered before the events to which they relate; but nothing prevents us from supposing that the oracle was formally consulted to obtain confirmation of previously selected sites and leaders of colonies, and for directions as to the cults to be introduced. This service was recognized by the colonies in dedications to Apollo Archegetes and by tithes, and thereupon several motives, sentimental, mercenary, and etymological, on the part of the colonists, the priests, and the historians, led to the invention of an increasingly imposing mass of legend which forms the bulk, if not all, of the extant oracles in meter, and which may occasionally drag into discredit oracles which possess some historic basis.⁴

¹ Delphic records are mentioned by Plut. *Solon* 11. 2: τοῖς Δελφῶν ὑπομνήμασιν. For poets in collusion with Delphi as a cause of the circulation of oracles see Schöll, *Philologus*, X, 25-81; Benedict, *De Oraculis ab Herodoto commemoratis*, Bonn, 1871, pp. 1-2.

² Cf. Wilamowitz, *Hermes*, XXX, 192. And for a theory as to the origin of the Cyrene oracles, see Studniczka, *Kyrene*, p. 100.

³ See the aetiological oracles in p. 10, nn. 1-4.

⁴ The work of Götze, *Das delphische Orakel in seinem politischen und sittlichen Einfluss auf die alte Welt*, Leipzig, 1839, has not been accessible to me. Certain other passages in which examples of colonization oracles appear may here be cited, without detailed comment: Vitruv. 4. 1. 4 (thirteen Ionian cities); Diod. 5. 81. 6 (Lesbos); Schol. Apoll. Rhod. 1. 9. 55 (Milesian colonists).